

REGULAR MEETING – MANSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
July 12, 2010

Mayor Elizabeth Paterson called the regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Audrey P. Beck Building.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Haddad, Keane, Kochenburger, Lindsey, Moran, Paterson, Paulhus, Ryan, Schaefer

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Haddad moved and Mr. Ryan seconded to approve the minutes of the June 28, 2010 meeting as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Revisions to the Ordinance Establishing a Fee Schedule for Fire Prevention Services

The Town Clerk read the legal notice for the public hearing. Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal John Jackman briefly reviewed the proposed changes which now include the fee schedule provisions as newly authorized by the Connecticut Fire Prevention Code. The code is applicable to all buildings, structures and uses except for one and two family dwellings. Council members requested clarification as to which agencies would be exempt from the fees. Mr. Jackman noted that Town agencies are exempt and that the threshold for any entity is that it must be regulated by the Code.

No members of the public commented and the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Haddad moved and Mr. Schaefer seconded to move Item 5, Swearing in of Fire Captain, as the next item of business.

The motion passed unanimously.

IV. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Inge Marie Eigsti, Wormwood Hill Road, spoke in favor of the two school or three school options and encouraged the Council to look at the research regarding small schools.

Michael Lynch, Coventry Road, spoke in support of the two school or three school options commenting that the education of our children has a direct impact on all our lives.

David Stern, Davis Road, spoke to the support and services his son received for his special needs and talents at the Vinton School. Mr. Stern questioned whether or not a larger school would have been able to provide the same.

Matvey Soklvsy, Storrs Road, spoke against the one school option for the following reasons: the state will not continue to support funding, three empty buildings will be expensive to maintain, one school is not as educationally flexible as smaller schools are and in larger schools some children may not receive the attention they require.

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Jane Goldman, Wormwood Hill Road, urged support for the two school or three school options. (Statement attached)

Lida Bilokur, Wormwood Hill Road, commented on the services for the Town's seniors. (Statement attached)

Mike Sikoski, Wildwood Road, commented on the FOI complaints lodged against the Ethics Board and heard by the Freedom of Information Commission. (Statement attached)

Jon Hand, Bundy Lane, spoke in support of many of the points made by previous speakers regarding the need for small schools. Mr. Hand commented that although he is not sure it is the best time to undertake a major project, if the decision to build is made he would be in support of the three school option.

Ric Hossack, Middle Turnpike, called for the resignation of the Ethics Board and if they refused called on the Town Council to dissolve the Board and appoint new members.

Jay Rueckl, South Eagleville Road, spoke in favor of the concept of small virtual neighborhood schools. Mr. Rueckl commented that in these schools a sense of community and belonging would develop since the students and parents would get to know each other.

Betty Wassmundt, Old Turnpike Road, asked the Council not to abdicate their responsibility to provide fiduciary oversight. (Statement attached)

Mark LaPlaca, Jonathan Lane, restated the following points that have been made during the school building discussion: Option A is more expensive than the one school option, if two schools are built only one vacant property will remain, the decision is for the next fifty years therefore flexibility needs to be built into the plan and Option E will provide cost savings and community schools. Mr. LaPlaca suggested the Council investigate ways to reduce the cost of Option E.

John Hodgson, Chaffeeville Road, thanked the Board of Education for listening to citizens. Mr. Hodgson supports small schools for small kids and noted some of the benefits of smaller schools.

V. REPORT OF TOWN MANAGER
Report attached.

Town Manager Matt Hart suggested Council members might want to discuss Items 11 and 13 under Petitions, Request and Communications. Mr. Hart also commented that this is an exciting time for senior services in the Town and that excellent progress has been made with the hiring of a new coordinator and social worker.

VI. REPORTS AND COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Ryan, chair of the Finance Committee, reported the Director of Finance has prepared a summary of COMP time and he is very comfortable with the policy. The information will be made available to all members at a future meeting.

Ms. Keane asked that a copy of the job description for the Senior Center Social Worker be provided to the Council at the next meeting.

Mr. Paulhus thanked Mr. Clouette for moderating the Town Meeting held earlier that evening. He also noted that the Finance Committee, one of the three Council Standing Committees, does provide financial oversight.

Ms. Moran clarified that elderly persons who have put their property in trust but still live there would not be subject to the approved Ordinance Regarding Off Street Parking on Residential Rental Property. She also stated the ordinance does not require people to cut trees larger than 12" but rather, trees of that size do not have to be cut to comply with the ordinance.

Mr. Haddad questioned whether or not speakers should be invited to the July 15th Special meeting on the School Options and an opportunity for public comment added to the agenda.

Mr. Haddad moved and Ms. Keane seconded to add the question to the agenda as the Item 9a. Motion passed unanimously

Mayor Paterson submitted emails from Bill Caneira, Anna Cranmer, John and Karin Rickards, Chandra Lownes, and Louanne Cooley to be included in the public comment record. (Statements attached)

VII. OLD BUSINESS

2. Revisions to the Ordinance Establishing a Fee Schedule for Fire Prevention Services

Ms. Keane moved and Mr. Kochenburger seconded to refer the ordinance to the Ordinance Development and Review Subcommittee. The Subcommittee will consist of Ms. Keane, Ms. Lindsey and Mr. Kochenburger and will report back at the next regular Council meeting.

Motion passed with all in favor except Mr. Ryan who voted nay and Mr. Schaefer who abstained.

3. Community/Campus Relations

Town Manager Matt Hart and Mayor Paterson will be meeting with UConn's Interim President Austin to discuss Spring Weekend and other issues. They will also reach out to Mr. McHugh, President of the UConn Board of Trustees, to arrange a meeting.

Mr. Haddad requested information detailing how UConn reports student involvement in incidents at Spring Weekend. Are UConn guest identified as outsiders or part of the student population?

4. Community Water and Wastewater Issues

Mr. Hart reported that he had checked the water levels earlier in the day and that the Fenton water flow was quite low and the Willimantic water flow was low but not as low as the Fenton.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

5. Swearing in of Fire Captain

The Town Clerk swore in Willard Cornell as a Fire Captain for the Town of Mansfield. Fire Chief Dave Dagon congratulated Fire Captain Cornell noting that he offers a tremendous amount of experience. Chief Dagon commented that the selection was made using an internal merit based process and that there were three very strong candidates for the position. Chief Dagon also thanked Charles Cosgrove for serving as Acting Fire Captain. Mayor Paterson also offered the thanks of the Council to Mr. Cosgrove and congratulations to Fire Captain Cornell.

6. Open Space and Watershed Acquisition Grant

Mr. Haddad moved and Mr. Moran seconded to approve the following resolution: Be it resolved that Matthew W. Hart, Town Manager of the Town of Mansfield, be and hereby is authorized to execute on behalf of the Town of Mansfield, an Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Agreement and a Conservation and Public Recreation Easement and Agreement and with the State of Connecticut for financial assistance to acquire permanent interest in land known as the Dorwart Property. Mansfield OSPA 253, and to manage said land as open space pursuant to Section 7-131d of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Motion passed unanimously.

7. Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) Application for Storrs Center Parking Garage Controls and Equipment, and Parking Signage.

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Paulhus seconded, effective July 8, 2010, to authorize the Town manager to submit an application in the amount of \$498,000 to the Small Town Economic Assistance Program to fund systems control equipment for parking structure equipment and controls and parking wayfinding signage associated with the Storrs Center Project.

Including some suggested wording changes by the Town Manager the motion was amended to read:

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Paulhus seconded, effective July 12, 2010, to authorize the Town manager to submit an application in the amount of \$498,000 to the Small Town Economic Assistance Program to fund design and construction of parking structure equipment and controls and parking wayfinding signage associated with the Storrs Center Project.

The motion as amended passed unanimously.

8. Ordinance Regarding the Procedure for Administrative and Fiduciary Oversight of Town Finances.

Mr. Paulhus moved and Mr. Ryan seconded, effective July 12, 2010, to schedule a public hearing for 7:30 PM at the Town Council's regular meeting on July 26, 2010, to solicit public comment regarding the proposed "Ordinance Regarding the Procedure for Administration and Fiduciary Oversight of Town Finances."

Motion passed unanimously.

9. Freedom of Information Act Requests, Cases and Updates

Assistant to the Town Manager Maria Capriola, assisted by the Town Clerk, provided a report/update on the Freedom of Information requests received by the Town and distributed a handout categorizing the number of requests and approximate cost to the Town to process the requests. (Handout attached) Ms. Capriola also updated the Council on the three recently resolved Freedom of Information cases filed against the Town and the one pending case. Ms. Moran asked staff to compile the estimated time and cost to the Town to prepare for the Freedom of Information cases filed against the Town.

9a.Procedure for July 15, 2010 Special Meeting Regarding the School Building Project

Council member discussed options for additional public input and decided that the July 15th meeting would be a work session for Council members with the understanding that there will be additional opportunities for public input. Both the members of the Board of Education and the School Building Committee have been sent notice of the meeting and representatives will hopefully be available to answer any questions Council members might have. The Town Manager will make arrangements to have the work session televised.

IX. DEPARTMENTAL AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

No Reports

REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

No Reports

X. PETITIONS, REQUEST AND COMMUNICATIONS

10. N. Beets re: Joint Town/University Relations Committee Meeting
11. F. Baruzzi re: Negotiations with the Mansfield Education Association – Mr. Ryan volunteered to represent the Town Council at the meetings.
12. Planning and Zoning Commission re: 8-24 Referral; North Eagleville Road Sidewalks
13. Open Space Preservation Committee re: Open Space Bond Referendum - – By consensus the Council agreed to refer the recommendation of the Open Space Preservation Committee to the Finance Committee.
14. Press Release: Courtney, FTA Administrator Rognoff to Announce \$4.9 Million Transportation Grant for Storrs
15. Press Release: CT Alert Emergency Notification System Helps Safeguard Lives and Property
16. State of Connecticut Library re: Historic Documents Preservation Grant
17. University of Connecticut Library re: Handbook for Connecticut Boards of Finance
18. Liberty Bank re: 2010 Willard M. McRae Community Diversity Award
19. Chronicle “Editorial: Residents are right: Ban Spring Weekend” – 06-23-10
20. Chronicle “Mansfield voters OK \$33.7M budget again” – 06-23-10
21. Chronicle “Key meetings in Mansfield” – 06-26-10
22. Chronicle “Mansfield residents tell council to consider one-school option” – 06-29-10
23. Chronicle “Voters OK Four Corners funding” – 06-29-10

- 24. Chronicle "Mansfield nixes rescue fee ordinance" – 06-30-10
- 25. Chronicle "Cookies anyone?" – 07-01-10
- 26. Chronicle "Mansfield delays action on land acquisition" – 07-02-10
- 27. Chronicle "Editorial: We offer these threads, needles" – 07-06-10

XI. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Mike Sikoski, Wildwood Road, continued his comments regarding the Freedom of Information cases filed against the Town.

Ric Hossack, Middle Turnpike, stated that if the Council will not ask for the resignation of the members of the Ethics Board then they are in favor of closed government.

Betty Wassmundt, Old Turnpike Road, stated she does not believe the Finance Committee provides fiduciary oversight as the meetings are run by Town staff. Ms. Wassmundt commented on the Freedom of Information cases she filed against the Town and alleged that the Council did not set up an effective Ethics Board.

XII. FUTURE AGENDAS

Mr. Haddad moved and Mr. Schaefer seconded to add to the July 26, 2010 meeting further discussion on the Board of Ethics and a vote of confidence for the Ethics Board.

Motion passed unanimously.

By consensus the Council agreed that the Mayor and Town Manager will discuss the most appropriate way to address an email received by members concerning a personnel issue previously discussed in executive session.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Paulhus moved and Mr. Schaefer seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously.

Elizabeth Paterson, Mayor

Mary Stanton, Town Clerk

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